

106TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 83

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Congress that the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and its President Slobodan Milosevic release the three detained United States servicemen and abide by the Geneva Conventions regarding the treatment of both prisoners of war and civilians.

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Whereas United States Army Staff Sgt. Andrew A. Ramirez, 24, of Los Angeles; Staff Sgt. Christopher J. Stone, 25, of Smiths Creek, Michigan and San Antonio Texas, and Spc. Steven M. Gonzales, 21, of Huntsville, Texas were captured on March 31, 1999, while patrolling the Kumanovo area;

Whereas these 3 honorable United States soldiers are now in the custody of the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and its President Slobodan Milosevic;

Whereas the Geneva Conventions, the 1949 treaties setting forth international requirements for the treatment of both civilians and military personnel during armed conflicts, stipulates that prisoners of war must at all times be humanely treated, provided any necessary medical assistance, protected against acts of violence or intimidation and against insults and public curiosity and evacuated from any area of danger;

Whereas the Third Geneva Convention also prohibits putting prisoners of war on trial for engaging in ordinary acts of warfare for which the capturing country's own soldiers would not be charged;

Whereas under the Geneva Conventions, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has the right to nonsupervised visits of prisoners to ensure they are being treated well;

Whereas the Yugoslav Government has as yet not responded to the ICRC's requests; and

Whereas sanctions can be applied to parties to the Geneva Conventions for failing to abide by the conventions: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring), That—*

3 (1) the United States Government should com-
4 mend the 3 detained United States soldiers for their
5 patriotism, bravery, service, and duty to their coun-
6 try;

1 (2) the United States Government should con-
2 tinue to forcefully press the Yugoslav Government
3 and its president Slobodan Milosevic for the uncon-
4 ditional release of the 3 detained United States serv-
5 icemen and, in the interim, to guarantee their health
6 and safety, and permit the International Committee
7 of the Red Cross to visit the servicemen and verify
8 their condition without supervision, and that all
9 other provisions of the Geneva Conventions be fully
10 respected;

11 (3) the United States Government should con-
12 demn any move on the part of the Government of
13 the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to put the three
14 detained United States servicemen on trial or sub-
15 ject them to public display; and

16 (4) the United States Government should hold
17 the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugo-
18 slavia and its President Slobodan Milosevic directly
19 responsible for the welfare of the 3 detained United
20 States servicemen.

Passed the House of Representatives April 15, 1999.

Attest:

Clerk.